“It is not the place, nor the condition, but the mind alone that can make anyone happy or miserable.” Happiness is viewed differently by everybody. What makes you happy and what makes me happy can be completely different things. However, whatever it is that gives me happiness is determined by me, and only me.

“Happiness always looks small while you hold it in your hands, but let it go, and you learn at once how big and precious it is.” My happiness is to have a warm, complete family, to have true friends and to be able to dance and show my true self on stage. However, without optimism we would be blinded from seeing the happiness we have in our daily lives.

Being optimistic is a lot more than just chanting, “It’s ok,” in your head. Being optimistic is a mental attitude that expects good and favourable results and believing that no matter what situation you are in, there is always something positive to take from it.

I was chosen to be the lead dancer for the dance my CCA – Chinese Dance choreographed for the Singapore Youth Festival. My CCA has achieved the highest achievement for eight consecutive years. Hence, I needed to live up to the standards of Singapore’s top Chinese dancers.

Since the December holidays, I have been practicing almost every single day. I could barely keep up with my school work and I became unhappy and stressed out. After one month of enduring the heavy schedule, I was ready to give up. What changed my mind was when I overheard a few of my batch mates complaining about how they did not get to participate in the SYF. At that time, I was thinking, “Do you have any idea how much effort you will have to put in, and how much stress you will be under?” However, after I rethought about their conversation, I realized that we both had something positive to take from our situations.

After that incident, I decided to give being the lead dancer another try. After a period of time, I learnt how to create a balance between school work and dance. Gradually, I got better at the SYF dance, and enjoyed and even looked forward to CCA practices, I was absolutely content with my role in the SYF dance. I had truly found happiness in dancing.

“Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be.” This quote reflects my belief on how positive thinking is the key to happiness. Happiness can be attained by anyone. But not everyone has happiness.